

Message Text

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PAGE 01 GUATEM 04183 152005Z
ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15
ICA-11 HA-05 ACDA-12 /097 W
-----047756 161208Z /43

R 142150Z JUL 78
FM AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0973
INFO DIA WASHDC
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MANAGUA
AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE
AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR
AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA
AMCONSUL BELIZE
USCINCSO QUARRY HEIGHTS CZ

C O N F I D E N T I A L GUATEMALA 4183

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PBOR, GT, BH, UK
SUBJECT: BELIZE: GOG ACKNOWLEDGES UK FORCES REDUCTION

REF: (A) GUATEMALA 4136 (NOTAL), (B) IR 6838 0139 78 (NOTAL)

BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED.

1. LOCAL PRESS CARRIED THIS JULY 12 FOREIGN MINISTRY
BULLETIN:
QUOTE: THE FOREIGN MINISTRY HAS RECEIVED INFORMATION
FROM THE BRITISH CONSULATE IN GUATEMALA TO THE EFFECT
THAT THE LONDON GOVERNMENT HAS DECIDED TO REDUCE THE
STRENGTH OF ITS HARRIER COMBAT AIRCRAFT IN BELIZE AND
TO MODERNIZE ITS ANTIAIRCRAFT DEFENSES AT BELIZE AIRPORT
WHICH WILL PERMIT THEM TO REDUCE THE NUMBER OF THEIR
MILITARY PERONNEL.

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PAGE 02 GUATEM 04183 152005Z

THE MINISTRY CONSIDERS THAT THE MODERNIZATION OF
THE INSTALLATIONS MENTIONED GIVES REASON TO BELIEVE THAT
THERE WILL BE THE SAME OR GREATER OFFENSIVE POWER,
EVEN WITH LESS PERSONNEL.

NEVERTHELESS, THE REDUCTION OF FORCES ANNOUNCED
CAN MAKE US HOPE THAT IT MAY BE THE BEGINNING OF WITH-

DRAWAL OF THE ADDITIONAL DETACHMENTS FROM THE BRITISH GARRISON IN BELIZE.

CONSEQUENTLY, THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT'S MEASURE COULD CONTRIBUTE TO THE CREATION OF A CLIMATE OF MUTUAL TRUST FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF EARLY NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN GUATEMALA AND GREAT BRITAIN. END QUOTE. END UNCLASSIFIED.

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2. BRITISH ANNOUNCEMENT ANTICIPATED IN AMBASSADOR'S JULY 12 CONVERSATION WITH FONMIN CASTILLO VALDEZ (REF A) CAME IN FORM OF JULY 12 PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION-AND-ANSWER (REF B).

3. COMMENT. GOG ACKNOWLEDGEMENT IS SOMEWHAT STIFFER THAN WE HAD BEEN LED TO EXPECT FROM FONMIN'S REMARKS TO US. DATT NOTES THAT THE AIR DEFENSE SYSTEM IN QUESTION -- RAPIER MISSILE SYSTEM -- WITH A RANGE OF ONLY 2000 METERS OR SO, CAN HARDLY BE CONSTRUED AS AN OFFENSIVE WEAPON. LOCAL MEDIA COVERAGE HAS BEEN VERY LIGHT. BOSTER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
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Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: BALANCED FORCE REDUCTIONS, DEFENSIVE WEAPONS SYSTEMS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 14 jul 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
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TAGS: PBOR, MPOL, GT, BH, UK
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